ADDRESS BY SHRI SRI PRAKASA, GOVERNOR OF MADRAS, TO THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ASSEMBLED TOGETHER AT THE ASSEMBLY CHAMBER, GOVERNMENT ESTATE, MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS, AT 11 A.M. ON MONDAY, 22ND FEBRUARY 1954.

Monday, 22nd February 1954.

The Governor on arrival was received at the main porch of the Legislative Assembly Building by the Speaker (the Hon. Sri J. Sivashanmugam Pillai), the Chairman (the Hon. Dr. P. V. Cherian), the Secretary to the Legislative Assembly and the Secretary to the Legislative Council.

The Governor was led in a procession by the Secretary to the Assembly and the Secretary to the Council and the Speaker and the Chairman and conducted to the dais.

The arrival of the Governor was announced to the Members by the Assistant Secretary and they stood up as the Governor entered the Chamber. The Members sat down after the Governor had taken his seat on the dais. The Speaker sat on the right side of the Governor and the Chairman on his left.

The Governor then delivered the following address :—

"Hon'ble Members of the Legislature,

'It gives me great pleasure to address you again, after an interval of about one year. The Andhra State has come into existence in the meanwhile, and many of our erstwhile colleagues have departed from us, to form their own separate Legislature at Kurnool. I am happy that all apprehensions were belied and the parting was smooth and easy. Let us take this occasion to extend to them, our best wishes in the building up of the State, they had longed for for years.

'I am fully aware of the desire of large sections in certain border areas of Chittoor district, to rejoin the parent State. The Government are looking into the matter and will try to reach a satisfactory settlement, in co-operation with the Andhra Government. It has, however, to be remembered that administrative boundaries cannot always coincide with linguistic grouping and aspirations. Peace and harmony can be maintained on either side, only if the educational and other amenities justly due to minorities are respected.

'Nature has been kind to us during the year, and we have had a welcome break in the run of adverse seasons. Barring a few isolated pockets, agricultural prospects are generally fair. Paddy crops have, however, been affected to some extent, by pests in a few districts. Our Agricultural Department is doing its best to minimise the loss by popularising the use of pesticides, by the inducement of substantial subsidies.

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'The improvement in seasonal conditions has reduced our dependence on imported food to a considerable extent. We have been able to lift the control on the movement of wheat and millets completely. The Government of India have agreed to meet our deficit to the extent of 2½ lakhs tons of rice, the bulk of which will come from Andhra. We may therefore hope to meet our commitments on the food-front, with greater confidence in the ensuing year. The poorer sections of the people must feel immensely relieved by the fall in prices of essential food articles.

'Even though our immediate anxieties regarding food are relieved, we have to find more permanent remedies for the future. With this view, the implementation of our irrigation programme is being stepped up to the last limit of our resources. In taking up new irrigation projects, Government will take all care to prevent any prejudice to the existing ayacuts. The Bhavani Project is nearing completion; and trained staff and equipment from that work, are being shifted to Manimuttar, Malampuzha and other projects, with a view to speed them up. Execution has commenced on the new Amaravathi and Vaigai reservoirs, and sanction may soon be accorded for schemes to utilize the surplus waters of the Ponniar. The programme of tank restoration is being accelerated, and several small irrigation schemes are also being taken up as a part of the Grow More Food drive.

'The scope for new irrigation is unfortunately limited not only by Finance but also by the non-availability of sufficient water to fill in new reservoirs. Our further efforts to grow more food should turn increasingly towards raising the yield from existing cultivation. That is the main emphasis of the Community Projects and the National Extension Services now being organized in different parts of the State. Village guides will endeavour to assist cultivators in every way, and in particular will demonstrate to them how improved seeds and intensive manuring can produce surprisingly good results. With the co-operation of the people, these services can be extended over a fourth of the State by 1956.

'The scheme of Local Development Works, recently initiated by the Government with the assistance of the Planning Commission, has been received with enthusiasm in rural areas. I am glad to note that villagers come forward in large numbers to utilize the part-grant from the Government for satisfying their long felt needs in village-wells, pathways, culverts, schools, etc. It is the intention to continue this beneficent scheme for some more years to come so as to enable the people to play a direct part in the betterment of their living conditions.

'With the lifting of famine conditions, it has become possible to earmark larger funds for the extension of electricity to rural areas. The scheme by which villagers were expected to find the capital for rural extensions, has been given up and the department is now taking up these extensions at an increased pace. With a view to meet the over-all power shortage, the capacity of the

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Madras Thermal Plant is being augmented; and it is proposed to sanction a new Hydro-electric project making use of the Periyar waters. The storage in our reservoirs is adequate for power generation this year and, therefore, there may not be any power-cut this season.

'Investigations in South Arcot, into the feasibility of mining the lignite deposits, have been encouraging. Work on the pilot project is being accelerated with the aid of machnery placed at our disposal under the Technical Co-operation Agreement with America. The Government are examining how the capital and organization required for exploitation on a commercial scale can be set up.

'The plight of handloom weavers has not improved to any appreciable extent in the absence of an adequately protected market for their goods. The Government of India have been unable to accept in full, our recommendation for reservation of certain categories of cloth for the handloom. They have, however, earmarked some funds collected as cess on mill cloth, to be utilized for popularising handloom products. Schemes for utilizing these funds, the most important of which is to subsidize the consumption of handloom goods, are being evolved and will be implemented soon. These schemes may bring in some relief, but we may have to press for radical measures, to sustain this important cottage industry.

'The general agrarian situation was a source of considerable anxiety to the Government. You are aware of the steps recently taken to stabilize the situation in Malabar, South Kanara and the Chidambaram taluk of the South Arcot district. The Government hope that these measures and the moratorium for one year recently granted to agriculturists all over the State, will go a long way to restore contentment. I appeal to all to work these measures with understanding and goodwill.

'For the better enforcement of prohibition, the Government have recently decided to transfer the work completely to the Police. Special prohibition squads under the control of the Inspector-General of Police, are being organized to check the abuses practised by anti-social elements. The Government are aware that a social reform of this kind cannot be brought into general acceptance without the fullest co-operation of the people and that even then, there will be always some people who will take advantage of the legal prohibition for making private gain through illicit practices. As long as we are convinced that the measure is good for the common man of this poor country, we should not lose faith half-way, merely because a few dare to infringe the law for private gain and tempt the weak. I would take this opportunity to appeal to you and to the people at large of the State, to give the Government their best support in this noble endeavour.

'The separation of the Judiciary from the Executive, has been further effected in the districts of Malabar, South Kanara and Tanjore. It is hoped that this reform can be completed in the State before very long.

'The welfare of Harijans and backward classes continues to receive the highest priority on the resources of the State. The provision for scholarships and boarding grants has been recently increased. A new scheme is now under consideration by which it is proposed to provide Harijans of as many villages as possible with a community centre where they can assemble for social and recreational purposes.

'In the matter of elementary education, the Government propose to start schools in all villages with a population of one thousand and more where there are no schools at present. We may have to open 1,270 new schools in the ensuing academic year. The Central Advisory Board of Education has at its recent session, confirmed the recommendations of the Parulekar Committee in respect of the modified scheme introduced in this State. The Government is examining the financial implications and proposals will no doubt be discussed in the Legislature in due course.

'The Health and Medical Services of the State continue to receive the careful attention of the Government. It is hoped that a new medical college may be inaugurated at Madurai at the commencement of the next academic year in July. An All-India training centre for rural Health Officers has been opened at the Poonamallee Health Unit, with the assistance of the Ford Foundation. Men trained at this Centre will soon be available in large numbers, for intensive work in the Community projects and other rural welfare activities. The Government are now considering what steps have to be taken to make it possible to speed up the grant of assistance to Municipalities, for the implementation of Urban Water-supply and Drainage schemes.

'It is proposed to introduce legislation during this session, pertaining to the following matters:—

(a) Elections to District Boards should have been completed before 1st April 1954. Because of our preoccupations, with partition, it was not possible to conduct these elections. The term of Special Officers may therefore have to be extended up to the 30th June next, and this requires legislation. In the meanwhile, the Government are considering how the different local bodies in the State should be reorganized to serve the people best.

(b) The Madras High Court has invalidated certain marriages celebrated according to the "Swayamariyathai" principles. Consequently the children born in such wedlock have become illegitimate. The Government propose to bring in legislation to remove this legal disqualification.

(c) The Madras Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act has been found defective in some respects, and certain enabling amendments may soon come up for legislation.

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(*d*) The Cattle Trespass Act has become inadequate under present-day conditions. Some amendments to make it more effective, have become essential. The necessary Bill can be passed in this session.

(*e*) The Electricity Undertakings Acquisition Act has been recently held invalid by the Supreme Court. Some electrical enterprises have already been acquired and compensated for, under this Act. After considering the full judgment which has not yet been received, it may be necessary to enact revalidating legislation as expeditiously as possible.

'This is essentially a Budget session to consider the demands for grants for the ensuing year. The Finance Minister in his speech will deal with those aspects of the administration which affect the Finance of the State. I have no doubt that you will conduct the deliberations with your usual grasp, decorum and responsibility. May Providence inspire you with faith and confidence. You have my best wishes for a useful and successful session.' "

The Governor then left the Chamber accompanied by the same procession as on his arrival.

The Members of the Assembly and the Council then dispersed.

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TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS